

BOSTON GLOBE
BOSTON, MA
D. 502,428

270334

SEP 4 1985

NEW ENGLAND NEWSCLIP



SDMS DocID

270334

EPA sues Boston & Maine for \$1.13m

Agency seeks to recover costs of cleaning up site of asbestos waste dump

By Fred Pillsbury
Globe Staff

The US Environmental Protection Agency has sued the Boston & Maine Corp. for \$1.13 million for the cost of cleaning up a 21-acre landfill site in the railroad's Iron Horse Park in North Billerica, where asbestos waste was dumped over a 30-year period.

The B&M had leased the site to the Johns-Manville Products Co., a major manufacturer of asbestos products, between 1944 and 1974. The company used it to dispose of

asbestos sludge, dust and waste board. Asbestos has the potential to cause cancer.

According to the EPA complaint, the federal Centers for Disease Control issued a public health advisory in March 1984 after finding uncovered asbestos fibers at the site. It then recommended immediate action by the EPA.

B&M spokesman Dennis Coffey said the federal agency told the railroad last year that it had the option of doing the cleanup job it-

self to federal specifications or letting the EPA do it and then face a civil suit.

The B&M decided against doing the project on its own, Coffey said, and the EPA covered the site with 18 inches of gravel and 12 inches of topsoil, which it then seeded and fenced off. Coffey said the B&M would have no comment on the suit at this time.

US Attorney William F. Weld, whose office announced the suit, said that the civil action filed in US District Court here last Friday

is "fairly representative of Superfund complaints." Under the Superfund statute, he said, the owner of any land that has to be cleaned up by the federal government is liable for the costs. "We think the Superfund law is a very important one," he said.

Although the B&M, along with the Maine Central and Delaware and Hudson railroads, is now owned by Guilford Transportation Industries, it has been the owner of the site ever since the lease started.



WILLIAM F. WELD
Boosts Superfund law